Higher Educational Institutes and Empowerment of Tribal Women: A Case of Rajaborari Estate with Special Reference to Dayalbagh Educational Institute

Synopsis

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1. INTRODUCTION

"A Woman is the full circle. Within her is the power to create, nurture and transform."

- Diane Mariechild

For accelerating socio-economic development of tribal region, it is essential to do women empowerment as they constitute half of the tribal population. For their overall and complete development women's participation in all the spheres of life is mandatory. Empowerment of the women is directly connected to their improved social status. Empowerment includes better healthcare, increased participation in economic and commercial sectors, awareness of rights and responsibilities, equal ownership of productive resources, higher literacy levels, education, better standards of living, self-esteem, self-reliance, and self-confidence.

In India there are 58,64,69,174 female out of total Indian population i.e. 1,21,01,93,422. India has rich proportion of tribal people which is 8.6% of the total Indian population. There are 990 females per 1000 males among scheduled tribes (Census 2011). Most of the tribal people are living in rural areas and a few of them live in urban area. We as a country of villages have been working towards sustainable development rural areas both socially and economically t our rural societies in both, economic and social ways. On the contrary, tribal people are still deprived of many opportunities like health, education etc.

Tribal women constitute approximately 50% of the total tribal population (Sex ratio is 990 according to census 2011). Tribal women do a lot of outside work (apart from household chores) related to agriculture and herding which contribute in family's income. Still they have no or lesser recognition in the economic sector. For tribal women there are a lot of hardships as they lack in educational, economic, social, health and political achievements. There have been number of policies and plans made by our government for the uplift and empowerment of tribal women. However, there are significant gaps between policy making and their implementation. There is need for proper evaluation of impact of such policies and programmes.

Being the citizens of India where the feeling of *Bandhutva* is implied, few people of the society work for the welfare of the scheduled tribes. **Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra** (DEI) is one such Institutions which is selflessly working in the same direction for the empowerment of **STs** of

Rajaborari Estate, Harda district, **Madhya Pradesh**. Many a dedicated staff and students have been working round the years for this cause.

Harda district was created in the year 1998. Population of the district is 570465 with male population of 294838 and female population of 275627 (**Census 2011)**. Average Literacy Rate of the district is 72.50%. Male literacy rate is 81.14% whereas female literacy rate is 63.27% (**Census 2011)**.

1.1 About the Rajaborari Estate

The fifth Revered Leader of Radhasoami Faith, Huzur Sahabji Maharaj purchased Rajaborari Estate in 1919 from an English Woman. Rajaborai Estate is a tribal area which comes under Harda district. Rajaborari is having ten villages under it, with population of around 3000. Population density is approximately 50. There are approximately 40 to 50 houses in a single village. Rajaborari Estate has mainly two categories of tribal - **Korku** and **Gond**. Literacy rate in Rajaboari is very less, but the eff orts and welfare policies of DEI have improved literacy in the tribe region.

Figure 1: MAP OF RAJABORARI
(Source: http://aadigyanproject.in/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Introduction-of-Rajaborari.pdf)

1.2 Dimension of Initiatives by DEI

Educational

In 1937, establishment of Radhasoami Adivasi Primary School took place which laid the foundation of formal education at Rajaborari. Middle school was established in the year 1979 and then secondary and higher secondary schools were established in the years 1982-83 and 1996 respectively. DEI took over the academic and administrative control of all the primary, middle and higher secondary schools

established in Rajaborari Estate in 2008-09. The "Open and Distance Learning" program was also started at Rajaborari in January 2008 to spread the vocational and higher education in unique blended distance education mode. Other courses like B.Com (Hons.), Office Assistant cum Computer Operator, Cutting & Sewing and Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed) are being offered at the Center.

There are more than 1200 students studying from primary to higher education in Rajaborari under DEI. Among these 1200 students approximately 43% are girls.

Skill Development

In November 2014, the rural entrepreneurial centers were established at Rajaborari under the supervision of the Director Prof. P. K. Kalra of DEI, by launching three programs: ATMA (Apparel and Toys Manufacturing Association), ADyNaM Foods (Agro and Dairy Nano Multiprocessing) and AAM (Automotive And Multi-skill) Karkhana. High quality garments are made by Tribal Women at DEI ATMA. These garments are exported to many places within and outside the country. This has made women of Rajaborari Estate financial productive and independent.

ICT

DEI took up the task of bringing the communication facility in Rajaborari. A High Speed Wireless Backhaul Network from Timarni to Rajaborari was set up with the first link established in2009. DEI partnered with BSNL for providing Telecom Services. DEI has also provided towers, wireless links, space and power at free of cost to BSNL.

Women's Health

In November 2019, A campaign was conducted in Rajaborari to educate the tribal women about the importance of personal and menstrual hygiene using foldscope. Approximately 100 tribal women were benefited through this campaign.

छात्र-छात्राओं को स्वास्थ्य संबंधी जानकारी दी

हरदा. राधास्वामी आदिवासी उच्चतर माध्यमिक विद्यालय राजाबरारी में गुरुवार को स्वास्थ एवं स्वछता पर कार्यशाला आयोजित की गई। इसमें दयालबाग यूनिवर्सिटी आगरा के विशेषज्ञ शामिल हुए। विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्रालय भारत सरकार द्वारा यूनिवर्सिटी को दिए गए शोध प्रोजेक्ट के अंतर्गत यह कार्यक्रम आयोजित किया गया। कार्यशाला की अध्यक्षता पूर्व मेडिकल कमिश्नर ईएसआईसी मप्र एवं छतीसगढ़ एवं वर्तमान मेडिकल ऑफिसर इंचार्ज राजाबरारी एस्टेट डॉ. रश्मी अरोड़ा ने की। कार्यशाला में आदिवासी बाहुल्य क्षेत्रों के करीब 350 छात्र छात्राओं को स्वास्थ एवं स्वच्छता संबंधित जानकारी दी गई। विशेषज्ञ बी. बिनती ने हैंडवॉश, सेनीटाईजर, टूथ ब्रश, नाखून काटने आदि से संबंधित सही तरीके बताए। राधास्वामी स्कूल के प्रधानाचार्य दिनेश स्वरूप कपूर एवं डॉ. अरोड़ा ने छात्र एवं छात्राओं को स्वास्थ एवं स्वच्छता किट प्रदान की। छात्राओं को सेनेटरी नेपकिन भी दिया गया। इस दौरान वरिष्ठ शिक्षक अगम प्रकाश, बीएम तिवारी, दीनानाथ विनायक, अन्नपूर्णा तिवारी, डी. सुमिर, सविता धीर आदि मौजूद रहे।

Figure 2: News article published in the local newspaper *Patrika*, Harda district edition, page no. 10, 8/2/2019 (Source: http://aadigyanproject.in/rajaborari-healthcare/)

These above mentioned are few initiatives by the DEI for the empowerment of tribes of **Rajaborari Estate. It can work as a role model for many other educational institutes to adopt** and work for the welfare of tribal people. We also need to measure effectiveness of these initiatives and welfare plans of DEI. A well-researched evaluation can help us in understanding the need of tribal people and also in rectify shortcomings to execute an even better future of scheduled tribes.

Development

According to **Cambridge English Dictionary**, "Development is the process in which someone or something grows or changes and becomes more advanced."

Development is a process which brings positive change, advancement, progress etc.

According to **Sociology Discussion**, Development means "improvement in country's economic and social conditions". More specially, it refers to improvements in way of managing an area's natural and human resources. In order to create wealth and improve people's lives.

Women Empowerment

According to **European Institute of Gender Equality**, "women empowerment is the process by which women gain power and control over their own lives and acquire the ability to make strategic choices."

According to **Lexico (Oxford Dictionary)**, "The process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights."

Scheduled Tribes

The framers of the Constitution took into consideration that certain communities of the country were suffering from extreme educational, social and economic backwardness on account of the primitive agricultural practices, geographical isolation and lack of infrastructure facilities. The Constitution of India in Article 366 (25) prescribe that the Scheduled Tribes means such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 of the Constitution to be Scheduled Tribes.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- **Maharaj Sahab** (1933), during his visit to Rajaborari mentioned in his diary that the market prices are low but people have good health and condition of their crops is also satisfactory. He also mentioned about a bund that would be built, so that the people do not have to face famine for ever. People also started interacting with each other communities and had *bhandaras* together. Earlier these people were having objections in dining together. This helped in eradicating caste differences related to purity and pollution. Women of Rajaboari had also learnt sing *Shabdas* from memory. Earlier they could not speak any language except the language of wild tribes.
- **Sinha** (1989) cited that the first five year plan document states that the "public co-operation through voluntary service organizations is capable of yielding valuable results in channelling private efforts for the promotion of social welfare".
- **Fluitman** (2002), stated in informal sector, there is a positive relationship among poverty reduction, skill training, increase in growth, productivity and innovation. In India, several programmes and initiative have been framed by the government, but tribes of various regions are actually deprived of these initiatives. Therefore, there is an urgent need for a paradigm shift to skill development sector that can help in high-level training and support the women living in low socio-economic condition to be self-reliant.
- **Subramanyam** (2006), NGOs and other organizations play a vital role by using their bottom-up approach. The social workers and volunteers of such organizations live among

tribal people and understand the actual needs of the people. They keep down the wastage in the implementation. The volunteers and the participatory approaches are the drawn from the community are the strength of these organizations.

- **Duflo** (2011), revealed that women empowerment and economic development are deeply interrelated. While development itself brings about women's empowerment, empowering women brings about changes in decision-making, which have a direct impact on development of the country.
- **Talmaki** (2012), Decision making, economic status and empowerment always go together. Tribal women who are not educated want their daughters to be educated. They understand the importance of education and economic development.
- **Muniyandi** (2012), The status of women generally depends on the economic roles they play. They remain below the poverty line due to lack of skills and regular income generating activities. Economic environment of women affects their social development.
- **Sindhi** (2012), Tribal Welfare Associations have been giving much importance to provide tribal youth and women with alternative skills to supplement and expand their income and employment. These associations also work towards fulfilling the community needs with locally available raw materials and human resources to optimum use.
- **Mallikarjun and Paramanand** (2013) state that, women need to be considered equal partners in the process of development. But they have remained at the receiving end due to centuries of subjugation and exploitation. In India, women have been neglected a lot. Women constitute almost half of the total population in the world. But they have been playing disproportionately a small role in economic activities. They have not been actively involved in the mainstream of development even though they represent equal proportion of the population in the labour force.
- **Banerjee** (2013), states that the position of women was terrible during independence. Women were deprived of getting equal opportunities as male related to health, education and decision making. The patriarchy and backward socio-economic condition of India place women at a

backstage. However even in contemporary times, the status of women represents high degree of gender discrimination.

- **Sharma and Afroz** (2014), A huge number of the women in our country is uneducated that is why they are suppressed. Women, who are educated and earning, are in much better social status in the society as compared to uneducated women worker.
- **Bhukya** (2015), to increase the socio-economic status of tribal community, empowerment of tribal women is essential and for this, participation of women is needed. The power to take decisions is very important from the view point of empowerment of women. In tribal societies, women are more important than in other social groups, because they work harder and the family's economy and management depends on them. Women empowerment is the basic element of improving the status of the women which includes high literacy, otriwnership of resource, high standard of living, self-esteem, self-reliance and self-confidence.
- **Nagaraja** (2017), Little consciousness has been arose among tribal women, about their subjugated position in the society. However this little awareness is essential for the empowerment process of tribal women. Totally they are in the way of process of empowerment and also empowered but not upto the mark of satisfaction.
- **Thamminaina** (2018), Welfare Organizations and NGOs with intense knowledge about the tribal community adopt a culturally sensitive approach to bring the desired change. Such approach builds a trustworthy relationship with the people. These organizations work u as a safety net and playing a vital role in the empowerment and development of tribal communities. They can effectively work as catalysts in the development process of tribal communities.
- **Soni** (2019), the need for empowerment of tribal women does not need any kind of justification. They play a crucial role in both economic and non-economic activities. In some cases these women even work harder than the men.

3. RESEARCH GAPS

- There have been many studies done on the empowerment of tribal women. But no research study has been done about the role of higher educational institutes in the empowerment of tribal women.
- No research on intervention by the higher educational institutes is done so far. Present study focuses on this aspect.
- No study has been conducted on development of tribal regions of Harda district. This will be covered under present study.

4. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Concept of Social Development:

Social development is a process that bring about positive change and advancement the society of human beings. It focuses on the welfare of people. Its target is to improve the well-being of people so that they can reach to their maximum potential. As whole it is a comprehensive and dynamic process. It is nothing but a **guided** social change. According to Millennium Development Goals there are eight goals that were to be achieved by 2015 and after 2015, there came Sustainable Development Goals which are seventeen in number, to be achieved by 2030. Both these development goals not only focus on economic development but much more than that.

Social development included high education level, high employment rate, less poverty, more choices, practical use of potential capabilities of human beings, good health status, uplifting weaker sections of the society and much more. It is more than just economic development. It includes sustainable development. 'Social development is the process of planned institutional change to bring about better adjustment between human needs and aspirations on the one hand and social policies and programmes on the other' **(Ahuja, 1993).**

Dube (1988) argued that 'development that makes no visible changes in the degraded lot of common man—the majority in the country's population—is no development. Growth that permeates a small segment of the society to wallow a vulgar high living is immoral.'

Initially, social development was not used in these connotations. Sociologists used social development in late nineteenth century to define the process by which societies evolve from primate or traditional

to modern societies. It was Hobhouse's work *Social Development* (1924) where he gave a different definition of social development which was later accepted by other sociologists. His idea was concern with planned social change which is also known as guided social change. From his work only we got this modern definition of social development.

Social development unlike economic development puts the human beings in the centre. It makes a commitment that it will benefit people, not only but particularly underdeveloped.

Figure 3: Millennium Development Goal (Source: https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/)

Theories of Social Development

Social development makes use of three different types of theories – Representational theory, Explanatory theory and Normative theory.

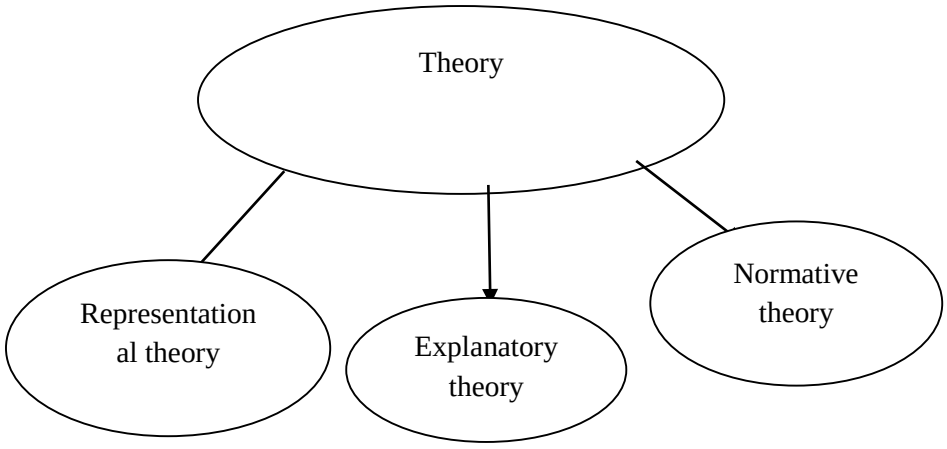

Figure 4: Three different types of theories

Representational theory translates observable structures or patterns in the real world into abstract, mental pictures. These representations are commonly known as models. This theory just try to provide the conceptual framework of social development. Explanatory theory of social change focuses on the causal events. Normative theory emphasis on the evaluation of the events.

The process of social development can be divided into three stages. Primarily, there is the pre-existing social system which social development seeks to change. Secondly, there comes the social development process itself and finally, there is the last stage or goal to which the process of social development seeks to attain.

In Sociology there are mainly three broad perspectives from which we can see the social development theory. Functional theory says that social development is a process of social change that brings about positive planned changed in the society. Conflict perspective says that Social development does not reach equally to whom it must reach. It must focus on the poor classes more which many times it fails to. Symbolic interactionist perspectives says that we need to give emphasis on the individual needs to bring the social development. It should particularly aim towards the people who lagging behind. Plans should also be according to the need of individual social groups.

Concept of Empowerment

The concept of empowerment originated from the civil rights in the USA in 1960. Empowerment refers to the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them. Empowerment is among the main procedural concerns when talking about human development. According to the United National Development Fund for women (UNIFEM), the term women's empowerment means:

- Acquiring knowledge and understanding of gender relations and the ways in which these relations may be changed.
- Developing a sense of self-worth, a belief in one's ability to secure desired changes and the right to control one's life.
- Gaining the ability to generate choices exercise bargaining power.
- Developing the ability to organize and influence the direction of social change, to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally.

There are three levels at which empowerment can be related: at the individual level, Group level and society/community level and also the interaction between the three. The National Policy for the Empowerment of women (2001) was an important and very essential step taken by the Government of India for accelerating the degree of women empowerment.

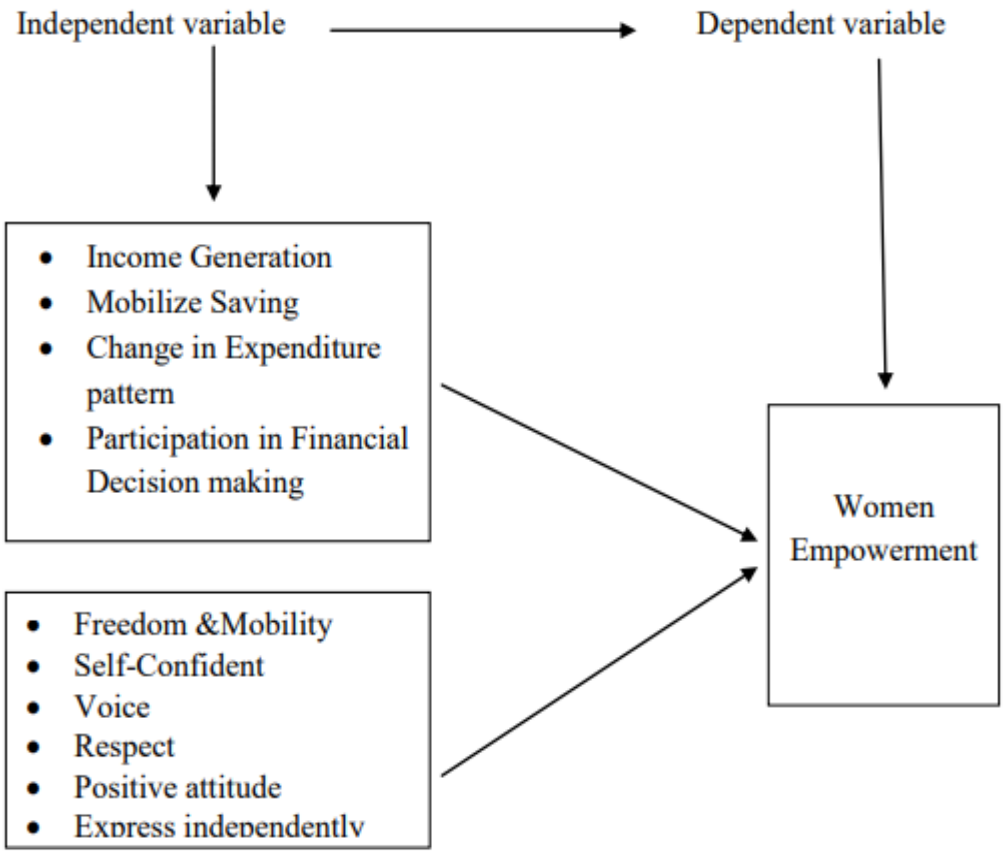

Figure 5: Conceptual framework of women empowerment
Source: Patel R D, Conceptual Framework and Theoretical Analysis on Women Empowerment (https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation.aspx?paperid=99245)

In the independent India the constitution gives women equal opportunity and discrimination-less society. Year 2001 was declared as year of Women's Empowerment (Swashakti) and the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women was passed. In 2005, amendment act of the Hindu law of inheritance was passed which enabled the women to have same status as that of men, i.e. right to have equal share in ancestral property. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 came into force from October 26, 2006. 73rd and 74th amendment acts provide 1/3 reserved seat for women in the local elected bodies. There any many more numbers of acts and provisions for empowering women in India and still women are under-representation in political and socio-economic spheres.

5. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In India there are number of NGOs and other organizations that are working for the empowerment and development of tribal women. But there are lesser higher educational institutes which are directly linked to any of the Indian tribal communities. Dayalbagh Educational Institute is among those very few educational institutes. Higher educational institutes can play a crucial role in this direction.

Even after so many initiatives of government, it has been observed that most of these plans and policies fail because there is a need for volunteers and social workers who can stay and understand the grass root development needs of these regions. Higher educational institutes have such educated and young man power, which can be utilised in this direction. There is a stick need for eradicating such self-centred attitude of the higher educational institutes and involve them in this journey of tribal welfare.

Teachers and students together can understand and work to solve the problems of tribal regions. For women empowerment, we can utilize our female students who can understand the need of tribal women and help them to eradicate them. We just do not need plans and policies, but we need volunteers who can understand the grass root needs and then help in eradicating them.

Such large number of higher educational institutes with educated students, scholars and teachers can probably be the best volunteers for serving tribal communities. The researcher tries to get a model of development for tribal women and their region which can be implemented by the higher educational institutes of the country. Therefore the present topic, **"HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES AND EMPOWERMENT OF TRIBAL WOMEN: A CASE STUDY OF RAJABORARI ESTATE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DAYALBAGH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE"** has been chosen to study the role of higher educational institute in the empowerment of tribal women and their region.

6. NEED OF STUDY

In India, tribal development often understood from the perspective of the "other." The other refers to many entities such as policymakers, politicians, social workers, and researchers. The perception of the "nontribal" development practitioners on the well-being of tribal communities need not coincide with the aspirations of the tribal communities. **(Thamminaina A** 2018).

It is important to study the role of higher educational institutes in the development of tribal regions. It can serve as a model for tribal development.

For their better development it is essential to study the intervention by the higher educational institutes to bring out strategies and methods that can be further implemented for the development of other tribal regions. It becomes a basic need to study such organizations which are playing a huge role in the development of these areas. DEI is among those few educational institute which are intensively working in this direction.

By studying DEI's role in the empowerment of tribal women and tribal region development as a whole, we can draw a clear model of development that can be used by other institutes as a model of development.

7. KEY WORDS

- Women Empowerment
- Tribal Women
- Higher Educational Institute
- Socio-economic Development
- DEI Model of intervention

Women empowerment is defined as a process that helps the women in gaining power, becoming self-reliant and confident.

Tribal women come under the social group of scheduled tribes of India.

Higher education Institute includes universities, professional colleges which provide professional, vocational and academic education.

Socio-economic Development is social and economic advancement or positive change in the desired direction.

DEI Model consists of initiatives by Dayalbagh Educational Institute for the empowerment of tribal community

8. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyse the socio-economic background of tribal women of Rajaborari Estate.

2. To map out the impact of modalities of intervention (DEI) on tribal women.
3. To study the challenges faced by tribal women in their empowerment.
4. To analyse the successes and failures of tribal women in their empowerment.
5. To compare the pre and post intervention level of socio-economic development of tribal region.

9. HYPOTHESES

H_{O1}: The socio-economic status of tribal women is relatively low.

H_{02}: Modalities adopted by DEI has no impact on tribal women.

H_{03}: Tribal women face socio-economic and cultural challenges in their environment.

H_{04}: There are no success stories of tribal women in their empowerment.

H_{O5}: No difference in socio-economic development during pre and post intervention in tribal region.

10. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aims at analysing role of the Dayalbagh Educational Institute in the empowerment of tribal women. Study of skill upgradation programme, formal education, campaigns for health and hygiene will be done systematically by the use of different methods.

10.1 AREA OF STUDY

The Study will be conducted in Rajaborari Estates, Harda District.

10.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The descriptive research design will be used.

10.3 UNIVERSE

All the women of the age of 15 and more will constitute the universe of the study.

10.4 SAMPLING

Simple Random Sampling will be used for the study. There will be two sections of the sampling. Learners of different modules will constitute one group of sample, whereas second group of sample will constitute of women who are not enrolled in any module. Simple Random Sampling of appropriate size from both the sections will be done. 20% sample will be drawn randomly from both the learners and non-learners. There will be two groups, control group and experimental group.

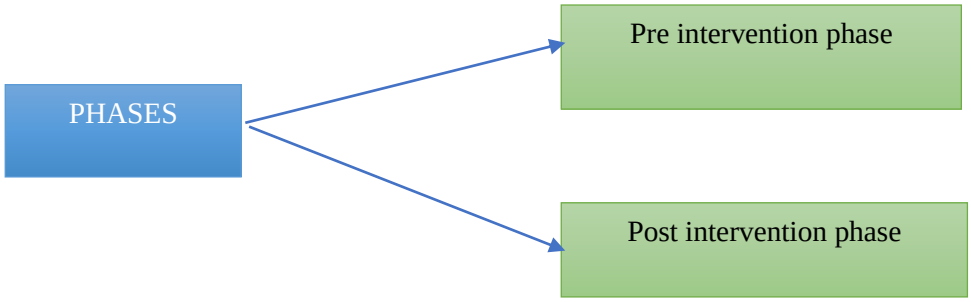

Figure 6: Sampling Groups

Serial No.	Name of the area	Sample Size
Pre intervention period		
1.	Women not enrolled in any initiative	20%
Post intervention period (Women from the age group of 15-40 years)		
2.	Girls enrolled in Schools	20%
3.	Women enrolled in Tailoring and skill based initiatives	20%
4.	Women enrolled in agriculture based initiatives	20%

10.5 SOURCES OF DATA

Both the primary and secondary data will be used during the research. For primary data interview schedule, questionnaire and personal interview methods will be used. Empirical method of study will also be used. Further, the researcher will have preliminary discussions with the officials/ social workers and heads of the respective tribes.

For secondary data in-depth study of the previous books, journals, diaries, articles and research papers will be done.

10.6 TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

For primary data interview schedule, observation and case study methods will be used. For secondary data books, journals, diaries, articles and research papers will be used as tool for collecting data

Indicators of Development

For Tribal Women (derived for Millennium Development Goals)

- Poverty and hunger
- Basic education level
- Gender equality
- Maternity health
- Self-hygiene
- Environmental sustainability

For Tribal Region

- Education level
- Health facilities
- Environmental sustainability
- Metalled roads
- Electricity
- Mobile networks & internet facilities (ICT usage)

Indicators of Women Empowerment

- Education
- Economic participation
- Economic freedom
- Role in decision making
- Employment
- Health
- Self-efficacy
- Participation in different sectors

11. TENTATIVE CHAPTERIZATION

Chapter: 1

- Introduction
- Review of literature

- Statement of the problem
- Significance of the study
- Objectives of study
- Hypothesis
- Research Methodology

Chapter: 2

- Socio-economic background of tribal women of Rajaborari Estate.

Chapter: 3

- Modalities of intervention of empowerment of tribal women.

Chapter: 4

- Challenges faced by tribal women in their empowerment.

Chapter: 5

- Success and failure in their empowerment.

Chapter: 6

- Role of DEI's intervention in socio-economic development of tribal region.

Chapter: 7

- Conclusion and Suggestions

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